

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-18. (Canceled).

19. (Currently Amended) An internal combustion engine with at least one piston reciprocating in a cylinder, comprising a piston ring region with at least one piston ring, with the piston comprising a piston wall and at least one first cavity for receiving gases passing at least one piston ring, with a piston ring region of the piston being connected via at least one first flow path with the first cavity, and with gases being removable from the first cavity via at least one second flow path, wherein the second flow path ends in an outlet opening in a region of the wall of the piston, with the outlet opening communicating in at least one piston position with an inlet opening in the cylinder wall, wherein a non-return valve opening in a direction of the collecting manifold is arranged in a region of the inlet opening.

20. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine according to claim 19, wherein the inlet opening leads to a collecting manifold in the cylinder housing.

21. (Cancel)

22. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine according to claim 19, wherein the first cavity is configured as an annular space.

23. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine according to claim 22, wherein the annular space is adjacent to the piston ring region.

24. (Currently Amended) The internal combustion engine according to claim 19, wherein the first cavity is flow-connected via at least one connecting manifold with a second cavity formed by a gudgeon pin of hollow configuration.

25. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine according to claim 24, wherein the gudgeon pin is sealed off on the face side by at least one cover.

26. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine according to claim 19, wherein the second flow path ends in a region of the piston skirt of a piston.

27. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine according to claim 19, wherein the first manifold originates from the piston ring region of at least one piston ring configured as a compression ring.

28. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine according to claim 19, wherein the first or second flow path is formed by at least one manifold formed into the piston.

29. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine according to claim 19, wherein the second flow path is formed by a gudgeon pin with hollow configuration.

30. (Previously Presented) The internal combustion engine according to claim 29, wherein the outlet opening is formed by an open face side of the gudgeon pin.

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